

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, January 11, 1996

Published Since 1877

Attendance: 3,300 + ...

Youths accept evangelism conference challenge to lead lost students to salvation in Jesus Christ

By James Fancher

More than 3,300 young people filled A.E. Wood Coliseum on the campus of Mississippi College in Clinton Dec. 28-29 for the 1995 Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference.

Bill Jones of Crossover Communications ministry in Columbia, S.C., served as conference speaker. He challenged students to return to their homes and schools and make a difference by leading their fellow students to Christ.

More than 50 young people responded publicly to Jones' challenge and pledged to do this. Practical help on how to witness in a clear and uncomplicated way was given on several occasions.

Sean Keith, consultant in the Sunday School Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), presented "True Love Waits — Thru the Roof," a campaign connected with the Baptist Sunday School Board's "True Love Waits" program that encourages young people to pledge sexual abstinence until marriage.

Keith reported that a rally will be held in Atlanta's Georgia Dome on Feb. 11, during which sexual abstinence pledge cards generated by the "True Love Waits" program will stretch from floor level to the roof of the Dome.

A helicopter will be used outside the Dome to hold the cards that extend above the roof level, he added.

A pair of Mississippi teenagers, David Eldridge, member of First Church, Clinton, and Shelley King, member of Park Place Church, Brandon, received standing ovations after giving their testimonies on living as sexually pure Christian young people.

Many youths at the conference pledged themselves to abstain from sex until marriage.

Images Creative Group of Nashville served as worship leaders and utilized drama to illustrate truth in a most inspirational way.

A Thursday evening concert was performed by East to West, a Marietta, Ga.-based duo that performs contemporary Christian pop hits. They also led the youths in singing older praise songs.

Mississippi College provided breakfast on Friday morning and sponsored a hospitality room for leaders



Josh Dear (left), minister of youth at Walker Hill Church, Rankin Association, takes a break between sessions of the 1995 Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference with Walker Hill members (from left) Amanda Smith, Teri Fulton, Shay Hauer, and Tonia Harrison. (Photos by Guy Henderson)



Corinth Church, Simpson Association, was represented at the 1995 Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference by cousins Leon May (left), Nick Hall (center), and Chris May. All three were attending their second youth evangelism conference. "We enjoy the singing the most," said Leon.

who accompanied young people to the conference.

Professions of faith at the conference numbered 12. There were 20 rededications and five decisions for full-time Christian vocations. A total of 94 public decisions were made.

The Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference is sponsored annually by the MBCB Evangelism Department.

Committee members for the 1995 conference included:

— Harvey Ellis (chairman), minister of youth at First Church, Clinton.

— James Fancher, consultant in the MBCB Evangelism Department, Jackson.

— Tom Daniel, minister of youth at First Church, Starkville.

— Jim Lott, minister of music at First Church, Pearl.

— Cindy Townsend, minister of youth at First Church, Jackson.

— John Gibson of Greenwood.

— Pasty Bozeman (secretary), secretary in the MBCB Evangelism Department, Jackson.

The 1996 Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference is scheduled for Dec. 30-31 in the A.E. Wood Coliseum on the Mississippi College campus in Clinton.

For more information, contact MBCB

Evangelism Dept. at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Fancher is interim director, MBCB Evangelism Department.



Dacia Dunaway, a member of East Fork Church, Amite Association, was a first-time participant at the 1995 Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference. "I enjoyed all of it," she said.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

The illusion of permanence

Time is a remarkable ally. Admittedly, to some it may appear as an enemy, but then the vision and the understanding is faulty. Often, time is viewed as stated by Oliver Wendell Holmes: "He (time) keeps all his customers still in arrears, by lending them minutes and charging them years."

Actually time is working on your behalf. It is a great healer, mending the wounds and leaving a scar as its signature. It is a friend bringing the days that are full and hastening away the days that are empty. Time moves us with steadfastness toward heaven, lest we find the pearls of the world and forget the Pearl of great price.

Gardner Taylor, famed black preacher, called time the "illusion of permanence." He declared that the young person needs this illusion to spur him onward, but as one gets older, life begins to show its impermanence. The unreliability of things begins to crack and fade.

We so quickly attach a permanence to things. We think life will go on as always; it will not.

Things can be seen much

clearer in the face of a sinking sun even though you have less light. Moses stood with eyes undimmed and breath unabated, attached to Moab though his heart was across the Jordan. Moab is no more a resting place than Egypt. The journey is interesting but never permanent. It will cease. Castles crumble, popularity wanes, and kings die. Sooner or later, the generation which knew not Joseph arrives on the scene.

The material things to which we cling will not survive. Houses or lands, movements or monuments are like Jonah's gourd vine: "It came up in a night and it perished in a night."

Actually it may be easier to deal with the gourd vines than with relationships. Parents, children, grandchildren, friends, or neighbors will not always be there. Life is the testing ground to prepare us for change.

The sunset memories are the sweetest. Some thoughts are so sensitive they can hardly stand the touch of memory — you can't dwell on it long. It is then that we appreciate what time is doing for

us. The old paths, old friends, precious family cannot continue as usual any more than one could hold back the sunset. So "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard..." and only the spiritually-minded man can receive this comforting revelation.

The little toy dog is covered with dust,
But sturdy and staunch he stands;
And the little toy soldier is red with rust,
And his musket molds in his hands;
Time was when the little toy dog was new,
And the soldier was passing fair;
And that was the time when our Little Boy Blue
Kissed them and put them there.
— Eugene Field

Some of our toys and even our monuments may remain for a season, but don't let it be an illusion of permanence. "Heaven and earth will pass away but my word shall abide forever," said the Creator.



Going "Thru the Roof!"

CONYERS, Ga. — Members of the youth group at First Church, Conyers, Ga., open and stack "True Love Waits" cards mailed in from around the world. The Georgia church is serving as collection site for the cards which will be stacked from the floor and "Thru the Roof" of Atlanta's 27-story Georgia Dome Feb. 11 during Atlanta '96/Youth Ministry National Conference 5. The "Thru the Roof" celebration will include music, challenges from Christian leaders, and testimonies from teenagers who have taken the "True Love Waits" pledge to remain abstinent until marriage. As of early December, more than 27,000 cards from all 50 United States and more than 50 foreign countries had been received at the church. (See related story on page 1.) Campaign organizers are urging all "True Love Waits" cards for the Atlanta display be mailed by Feb. 1 to: "True Love Waits," 958 Millstead Ave., Conyers, GA 30207. Teens who signed cards for the Washington, D.C., event should re-sign cards for this event and mail them to the same address. "Thru the Roof!" celebration tickets for youths and sponsors at \$13 each must be purchased in advance by writing to MSN 152, Baptist Sunday School Board, 127 Ninth Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37234-0152. To order True Love Waits planning kits and commitment cards, call (800) 458-2772. (Photo by Jim Veneman)

Jackson's Reformed Seminary president stresses lay ministry

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Ministers who fail to take seriously the ministry of laypeople do so at the peril of the church of Jesus Christ, an evangelical seminary president told December graduates of Southern Seminary.

"I'm here to remind you not only of the noble call that is yours as ministers in the church but to remind you that in your specialized training and calling God asks you to join with all those to whom he gives responsibility for ministry in the church," said Luder G. Whitlock, president of Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson. He urged graduates to commit themselves "to the training, the education and development of those laypeople for whom and on whom the future of the church is dependent."

Whitlock, an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church in America, addressed 159 graduates who received master's and doctoral degrees at the Louisville, Ky., seminary's 176th commencement Dec. 15.

In his address, Whitlock said the apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians "makes it plain that each believer is called to ministry." Church reformers Martin

Luther and John Calvin also emphasized the importance of lay ministry, Whitlock said.

"One of the reasons for the strength and vibrant expansion of the church in this country undoubtedly was tied to the involvement of the laity, and nowhere was that seen more powerfully than among Baptists here in the South," Whitlock said. "The tragedy in recent years in many of the churches in our country is that we have forgotten our heritage and forgotten much of the truth of Scripture. We have ignored the importance of the average believer and the responsibility of the average church member to join with us in ministry."

Whitlock attributed much of the decline of lay ministry to the proliferation of large churches. He noted 15% or less of the churches in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) contain half the denomination's membership.

"One of the things that happens in an urban world filled with big churches is that you have congregations that tend to be led by pastors and by staff," he said. "It happens not only in the SBC but among other groups as well."

In today's world, the morals of church and unchurched people are hard to distinguish, Whitlock observed. The lack of moral vision by Christians stems from their not understanding "the truth of God's Word and the implications of that Word for human behavior," he said, emphasizing that ministers bear the burden of teaching laypeople the truth of Scripture.

"We can celebrate the call God gives us to serve his church and to bring glory to him, making people aware of how good and great he is and the truth and the power of the gospel," Whitlock said. "But if we fail, we shall be held responsible."

In a separate ceremony the same day, Southern Seminary's Boyce Bible School granted 10 associate of arts degrees and 23 diplomas and certificates. Speaker for that ceremony was Paul W. Powell, president of the Annuity Board.

Observe Sunday on Jan. 21, 1996

THE FRAGMENTS

A dangerous place

Where is the most dangerous place in the world? Could it be on an airplane? Last year there were several crashes killing hundreds. In late December flight 965 went down near Cali, Colombia, killing more than 150 people. Even so, air travel is considered safe.

Up, up goes the speed limit and the death rate on the highways will likely increase. More than 55,000

will die on American highways this year. However, the automobile is still a safe way to travel.

So what is the most dangerous place? It is in a mother's womb. This year there will likely be more than 1,500,000 abortions — making the womb the most dangerous place to be. Ezekiel the prophet said it well: "Thou hast slain my children" (Ezek. 16:21). — GH

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Religious educators will celebrate 50 years at Feb. convention

Members of the Mississippi Baptist Religious Education Association (MBREA) will observe the 50th anniversary of the organization at their annual convention Feb. 29-March 2 at the Ramada Plaza Hotel on County Line Road in Jackson.

The convention theme is "Religious Education: Reflecting on the Past, Looking at the Present, and Focusing

on the Future."

Program personalities include: — James Sullivan, a Mississippian who served for 22 years as president of the Baptist Sunday School Board (BSSB) of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Mississippi College graduate, a noted speaker and author in Southern Baptist life, was named Clergyman of the Century by messengers to the Missis-

sippi Baptist Convention's annual meeting in 1985.

— Keith Wilkinson, director of the Sunday School Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) since 1983. He has served as pastor, director of missions, and as a denominational worker for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma and at BSSB.

— Bill Taylor, director of the Bible Teaching-

Reaching Division of the BSSB since November 1994. He was executive pastor of North Phoenix Church in Phoenix and has also served as minister of education in churches in Texas, Florida, Georgia, and Louisiana.

— Cliff Jenkins, head of Church Growth and Development ministry in Springdale, Ark. He is a church growth consultant,

author, and speaker who has served as associate pastor and education minister in churches in Arkansas, Missouri, Texas, and Florida.

— Ron Lewis, senior pastor of Richardson Heights Church in Richardson, Texas. Prior to accepting the call to Richardson Heights Church in August 1992, he was president/senior consultant of Church Growth Designs. He has also served as a BSSB church growth consultant.

A special banquet with Jenkins as featured speaker will be held at the Ramada Plaza Hotel on March 1 at 6:30 p.m.

Cost for banquet reservations is \$14 per person. Childcare will be provided during the banquet time.

Joe Armour, MBREA president and minister of education at First Church, Clinton, said MBREA charter members and former members will be spotlighted at the banquet in honor of MBREA's 50th anniversary.

"If you are a charter member of MBREA or a former member, please get in touch with me so you can be recognized during the spe-

cial time at the banquet. We would like for you to attend or send a letter that can be read at the banquet," he said.

Armour also pointed out that a display of memorabilia from the first 50 years of MBREA will be presented at the meeting.

"We are still accepting items to be displayed. Anyone who would like to share anything with us should

contact me as soon as possible," he said.

Armour can be reached at P.O. Box 72, Clinton, MS 39060. Telephone: (601) 924-6705.

A pair of golf tournaments will be held in connection with the meeting, the first at Castlewoods Country Club in Brandon on Feb. 29 and the second at Shady Oaks Country Club in Jackson on March 1.

Lodging reservations should be made by Feb. 14 directly with the Ramada Plaza Hotel by calling (601) 957-2800 or toll-free (800) 227-5489. Be sure to mention MBREA; room rate is \$68 per night for standard single/double rooms, while a king-size room is \$78 per night single/double.

Registration deadline for all events connected with the MBREA annual convention is Friday, Feb. 9.

For registration information, contact MBREA secretary-treasurer David Webb, minister of education and youth at Union Church, 1716 W. Union Road, Picayune, MS 39466. Telephone: (601) 798-6470.

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

The Baptist Record

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Thursday, January 11, 1996

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Mississippi Baptists give record amount to 1995 CP

By Tim Nicholas

Mississippi Baptists set a record in 1995 for gifts to the Cooperative Program (CP), topping the state convention's budget by the highest amount in history.

Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), said the total given in 1995 was \$23,216,436. That is \$609,857, or 2.70%, over the budgeted goal of \$22,606,579.

Gifts in 1994 of \$22,474,619 made the previous high and 1990's \$504,706 over budget was the previous highest average.

CP gifts for 1995 were actually higher than the announced final total, but since the last Sunday of the year fell on Dec. 31, those gifts are counted toward the 1996 budget.

Board policy states that any gifts not received by the MBCB on Dec. 31, are not counted until the next calendar year.

"This is a demonstration that our pastors and people really do believe that Mississippi is responsible for helping win the world.

"That's quite a testimony to the leadership of the pastors and lay people of the churches who have responsibility in this area," Causey said.

Mississippi Baptist Convention President Jimmy Porter, pastor of First Church, McComb, said, "To me it makes a statement that Mississippi Baptists are committed to supporting the Lord's work through the efforts of the Mississippi Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. It is a victory and we should all be singing 'To God be the Glory'."

David Michel, director of the MBCB Stewardship and CP Promotion Department, said, "The generosity of Mississippi Baptists continues to amaze me and other observers around the SBC. While our state is often maligned as the poorest in the nation, we regularly lead in per-capita giving to all missions causes and the CP."

"1995 is an outstanding year in a long legacy of generosity which we pray will stretch into the future as we seek to bring Mississippi

and the world to Jesus."

The \$609,857 budget overage goes into a challenge portion of the budget. State convention messengers voted in 1995 to contribute 50% of any overage to Christian education in the state, 25% to Southern Baptist Convention causes, and 25% to the MBCB.

Barri A. Shirley, MBCB director of accounting and personnel services, noted that the education portion of the CP budget had been frozen for four consecutive years. The \$3,730,045 budget gets an additional \$304,928.

Also, said Shirley, approximately two-thirds of the \$150,000 going to the MBCB will go to fund the Partnership Missions office, which earlier had been funded by designated gifts.

Shirley said that any Mississippi Baptist can check on his or her church's giving for 1995 on request. "We'll be glad to help," said Shirley.

Nicholas is director, MBCB Office of Communication.

SBC gifts to CP down for December

NASHVILLE (BP) — Cooperative Program (CP) gifts for the month of December were down from a year ago, but designated gifts continued to climb, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee.

For December 1995, CP gifts totaled \$11,292,845 compared to the same month in 1994 of \$12,218,783, a difference of \$925,938 or 7.58%. Executive Committee finance officials said the drop likely was due to delays in receiving gifts from state conventions during the holidays.

For the year-to-date, CP first quarter gifts totaled \$32,974,184 compared to the same period a year ago

of \$34,494,918, a difference of \$1,520,733 or 4.41%. The SBC fiscal year is October through September.

Designated gifts continued to climb as December gifts totaled \$3,510,249 compared to \$3,309,045, for an increase of \$201,204 or 6.08%. For the year-to-date, designated gifts total \$8,343,108 compared to last year of \$7,067,706, an increase of \$1,275,401 or 18.05%.

For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, which requires \$11,802,427 each month, the gifts for December were 4.32% below budget (\$509,581) and for the year-to-date, the total of \$32,974,184 is 6.87% below the required budget of \$35,407,281.

1996 MBREA Convention

Feb. 29-March 2, 1996

Ramada Plaza Hotel, Jackson

Thursday, Feb. 29	
9 a.m.	Golf Tournament (Castlewoods Country Club, Brandon)
2 p.m.	Registration
3:15 p.m.	Welcome & Open House
5:30 p.m.	General Session — James Sullivan
7 p.m.	Dinner on premises
8:10 p.m.	General Session — Keith Wilkinson
8:30 p.m.	
Friday, March 1	
7:30 a.m.	
8:15 a.m.	
8:30 a.m.	Bible Conference
9:40 a.m.	General Session
10 a.m.	
11:10 a.m.	
Saturday, March 2	
7:30 a.m.	
8:15 a.m.	
8:30 a.m.	Bible Conference
9:40 a.m.	General Session
10 a.m.	
11:10 a.m.	



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

Our pastor gives the appearance of evil and sets a bad example for our young people. The congregation is getting smaller and smaller. Aren't the deacons responsible for handling this situation?

Have you talked with the deacons or — better yet — the pastor? I assume you are praying for your church's leaders and are seeking the right time and place to approach them with your concerns. Our leaders often come into their positions with hurts and frustrations, and with feet of clay. They can make mistakes. The congregation will suffer if the church leaders do not seek proper help. That is why it is important to pray for our church leadership (ministers and lay leaders) so Satan will not trip them up and lead other people astray. Voice your concern to a deacon, but most of all pray that God will use this difficult time to strengthen your faith and your church.

My brother, who died last week, was saved and baptized. He

was also homosexual. I know he loved the Lord; do homosexuals go to heaven?

There are references to the sin of homosexuality in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 1 Timothy 1:8-11, Romans 1:26-27, and other places in the Bible, but it is usually listed with other sins as well. Romans 10:13 (NIV) states, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." If a person asks Jesus into his heart, his eternity is sealed. Our loving heavenly Father accepts his child, even though he may be disappointed with the actions of the child. Jesus gave a good illustration of this concept in the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32). Our selfish society has created much confusion in the area of homosexuality. Some people find it easier to attain fulfillment in homosexuality than in relating to God's plan, and our culture often condones such behavior. Yet, God still died for all of us. He is interested in seeing us first submit to him and then deal with our sins.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

Elliff nomination for SBC president set

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — Tom Elliff, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla., will be nominated for president of the Southern Baptist Convention at the SBC annual meeting in New Orleans by Fred Wolfe, pastor of Cottage Hill Church, Mobile, Ala.

Wolfe, a nominee for SBC president in 1994 and former chairman of the SBC Executive Committee, said in a telephone interview, "I prayed about it and sensed the leadership of the Holy Spirit" to nominate Elliff, "then consulted with several friends from around the country and they were as excited and positive about Tom as I am."

Elliff, a former president of the SBC Pastors' Conference, confirmed he has prayed about Wolfe's initiative and will serve in the position if elected.

"Tom Elliff has experience and maturity," Wolfe said. "He's served as one of our Southern Baptist foreign missionaries. He's led great churches. He has what it

takes to lead us through the transition brought on by 'A Covenant for a New Century,'" the SBC restructuring approved by messengers during the 1995 SBC sesquicentennial in Atlanta to reduce the number of convention agencies from 19 to 12 and heighten home front SBC efforts through a new North American Mission Board.

"I believe God has brought him to the kingdom for such a time as this," Wolfe said of Elliff.

Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Church, Dallas, affirmed Elliff's nomination. "Tom Elliff is a proven leader among Southern Baptists. There is

a strong consensus among pastors and laypersons across our convention that Tom is the man to lead us," Graham said. "The restructuring presents a formidable opportunity for Southern Baptists to launch into the next century with greater effectiveness. We need a man with a heart for missions and evangelism to be our leader. Tom is the man for such a time as this."

In addition to his 1989 presidency of the SBC Pastors' Conference, Elliff has been SBC convention preacher; chairman of the Committee on Order of Business; and a frequent Pastors' Conference speaker.

Texas church's \$15 million debt forces Chapter 11 bankruptcy

AUSTIN, Texas (BP) — Facing foreclosure on a \$15 million overdue debt, Great Hills Church, Austin, Texas, has filed for bankruptcy protection.

Much of the debt was incurred in construction of a 3,600-seat sanctuary and 75,000-square-foot education building during the economic boom in the early 1980s.

With 3,895 members, Great Hills is the third-largest congregation in Austin Baptist Association.

The church's pastor for 27 years, Harold O'Chester, said the bankruptcy filing in federal court will not interrupt the congregation's services and ministries.

Great Hills trustee chairman Herschel Kelley said the church had considered seeking bankruptcy protection much earlier but did not because "the idea of a church filing for bankruptcy was abhorrent, and we thought we could work it out without doing that."

The church filed for Chapter 11, which permits an organization to continue operating while negotiating a plan of reorganization with creditors.

Bankruptcy lawyer Stephen Sather, representing the church, called the action "the last fallout from the real estate crash of the 1980s."

In the early '80s, Great Hills had a plan to build a new complex on a new site without incurring significant debt. Investors who bought the church's original property on Allandale Road and 12 additional acres

for about \$6 million defaulted, and the savings and loan which had issued a letter of credit guaranteeing the transaction also went broke.

Great Hills lost the property to foreclosure and ended up seeking \$9 million in high-interest bonds.

When Great Hills missed its third payment on the loan eight years ago, cost-cutting measures were implemented which resulted in all but one staff member being released. Sunday School attendance dropped to 750.

The church is now growing rapidly and is trying to restructure its total debt, O'Chester said.

The church has made some payment, but with accrued interest

costs, Great Hills owes bondholders \$14 million, Sather said. It also owes approximately \$700,000 to other creditors.

Sather said Great Hills faced a foreclosure deadline Jan. 2, following several months of negotiations with creditors consisting of more than 1,000 bondholders with the A.B. Culbertson and Company Investment Bankers of Fort Worth.

The church and its creditors have a common interest in avoiding foreclosure, said Sather, because bondholders would end up with property and buildings that are no longer tax-exempt and would have difficulty finding a buyer for such a large church structure.

Hattiesburg church hosts Jan. MasterLife workshop

Mt. Olive Church, Hattiesburg, will be the site for a MasterLife Workshop on a split weekend schedule, Jan. 18-20 and Jan. 25-27.

Mt. Olive Church is pastored by Arthur Sagers and is a member of the Lebanon Association.

The workshop will be held on Thursdays and Fridays at 6:30 p.m. On Saturdays the workshop will begin at 8 a.m. and conclude at 5 p.m. Participants will need to attend these three days on both weekends to be certified in MasterLife.

The co-leaders for the workshop will be Larry Goff, BSU director at Jones County Junior College, and John Temple, pastor of First Church, Madison. Facilitators for the workshop will include Linda Goff of Ellisville and Terry Martinaz, minister of education at First Church, Madison.

To register for the workshop,

call the Lebanon Association at (601) 261-2771. For more information, call the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, at (800) 748-1651. There is a \$75 fee to cover conference material only.

The workshop is sponsored by the MBCB Discipleship and Family Ministry Department, Mose Dangerfield, director; the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, David Carter, MasterLife Specialist; and the Lebanon Association, George Berger, director.

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Revival Dates

Pearson, Pearl (Rankin): Jan. 14-18; Mon.-Thurs., 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Allen Stephens, Rankin director of missions, evangelist; Buddy Casey, Warner Robbins, Ga., music; B. Wayne Long, pastor.



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January 11, 1996

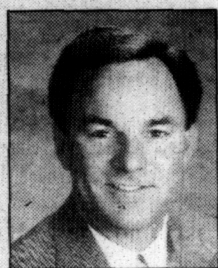
HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.



Bill Causey



Ken Alford



Ronnie Floyd



Rodney Gage



Jim Henry



Joe Ratliff



Buster Pray



Jenni Till



Jay Strack

Mississippi Baptist EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

January 29-30

*"And he
brought
him to
Jesus."*

—John 1:42

**Colonial Heights
Baptist Church • Jackson**



Evangelism Conference is provided to Mississippi Baptists by Cooperative Program Gifts
Sponsored by:

EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT

James P. Fancher, Interim Director

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Bill Causey, Executive Director-Treasurer



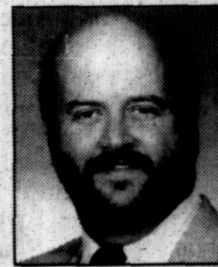
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James P. Fancher



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Pray this day... January 12-25

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
missionary kids leaving parents to return to school after holidays.	church preparation for Season of Home Missions/Prayer for Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.	travel safety for state WMU staff returning from national WMU planning in Alabama.	happy birthday to John Vaughn, missionary to Brazil. Daughter Michelle's adjustment to high school in the USA.	wisdom to know God's will, state staff planning meeting.	two missionaries on their birthdays: Ruth Bailey, Bolivia; R. Mason, church/home in a restricted area.	new DOMs from Mississippi associations receiving training.
H. Barron, missionary in a restricted area, safety for her and family.	preparation for Baptist Nursing Fellowship, William Carey College; meeting health needs.	Helen Meyers, church/home missionary, Nigeria; birthday blessings.	Clifton Curtis, birthday this week; agriculture missionary, Burkina Faso.	missionary nurse, Karen Brown, Colombia; Sherrie Meilstrup, church/home Argentina.	state WMU Board and associational leaders for God's leading. Rob Sugg, general evangelism; Taiwan; birthday blessing.	missionary Bob Gabriel, Brazil, joy in personal evangelism/happy birthday.



MARCH

The numbers indicate the day of the month and the year of birth. For instance, 3-76 means March, 1976.

06-91 — Miss Hanna E. Webb, Apartado 100, 2350 San Francisco de Dos Rios, San Jose, COSTA RICA; Parents: Elvin & Janet, General Evangelism

8-82 — Mr. David Song, 431 Tee Street, Biloxi, MS 39532; Parents: Woong Ho & Sook Ja, Field Personnel Assistance

9-84 — Mr. Charles R. Wilkins, P.O. Box 835, 6307 Larnaca, CYPRUS; Parents: David & Jana, Mission Administrator

11-88 — Miss Mindy M. Kliesch, Ecole Baptiste de Theologie, B. P. 4860, Lome, TOGO; Parents: Milton & Pamela, Theological Education

16-93 — Mr. David A. Vaughn, Caixa Postal 625, 95001-970 Caxias do Sul, RS, BRAZIL; Parents: John & Kathy, General Evangelism

24-89 — Miss Robyn L. Kyzar, Apartado 4035-1000, San Jose, COSTA RICA; Parents: Russell & Melinda, Literature Distribution/Promo.

25-72 — Mr. Devin Meilstrup, 116 Meadow Lane Circle, Clinton, MS 39056 (MC Student), Parents: Dennis & Sherrie, Music Promotion, SERVE IN ARGENTINA

25-84 — Mr. Ledger C. Parker, 28 Tremena Gardens, St. Austell, Cornwall PL25 5QH, ENGLAND; Parents: Jeffrey & Shiela, General Evangelism

26-79 — Mr. Deron K. Meilstrup, Diaz Valez 306, 1636 La Lucila, Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA; Parents: Dennis & Sherrie, Music Promotion

27-88 — Miss Allison L. Martin, Casilla de Correo 5, 8400 San Carlos de Bariloche, ARGENTINA; Parents: Asbury & Hope, General Evangelism

29-89 — Mr. Caleb K. Thompson, 1631 Main Street, Franklinton, LA 70435, GER-MANY; Parents: Lonnie & Deborah, General Evangelism, SERVE IN GERMANY



NATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING

DATE: Begins noon, February 29 thru 9:30 a.m., March 3, 1996

PLACE: Wynfrey Hotel, Birmingham

For additional information contact:
Edna Ellison, Consultant
WMU Department, MBCB
601-968-3800 in Jackson or
1-800-748-1651

Singles Mission Rally

Friday, February 23, 1996
7:00-9:00 p.m.

Main Street Baptist Church, Hattiesburg

Entertainment • Mission Awareness for Singles
Testimonies/Displays • Refreshments

Featuring: Jan Cossitt & Glenn Shows, MBCB
(Hosted by Steve Bublitz -- 544-5444)

HOUSE TOPS

WOMEN'S CELEBRATION

February 2 & 3, 1996
First Baptist Church, Clinton



Lee Ezell

Cost: \$15

(includes program, limited insurance, two breaks)



Anne Davis



Madeline Mims

Deadline: January 29, 1996
(No refund after this date)

Schedule

Friday

7:00 p.m. Welcome
7:15 p.m. Music - Madeline Mims
7:30 p.m. Bible Study - Anne Davis
8:15 p.m. Music - Madeline Mims
9:00 p.m. Lee Ezell
9:45 p.m. Autograph Party (refreshments)

Saturday

8:00 a.m. Music - Madeline Mims
8:15 a.m. Bible Study - Anne Davis
9:00 a.m. Music - Madeline Mims
9:15 a.m. Lee Ezell
10:00 a.m. Break (Refreshments Provided)
10:45 a.m. Music - Madeline Mims
11:00 a.m. Bible Study - Anne Davis
11:45 a.m. Music - Madeline Mims
Noon Lee Ezell
1:00 p.m. Dismiss

Motels

COMFORT INN (Clinton) - 924-9364

1 Adult - \$50.00 plus tax
2 Adults - \$55.00 plus tax
(\$5.00 each additional adult)

HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS (Clinton)

924-0064

\$55.00 plus tax - up to 4 per room

COMFORT INN - 922-5600

(Greenway Dr., off I-20)

Single - \$50.00 plus tax
2 Queen Beds - \$55.00 for 2 adults;
\$60.00 for 3 or more adults
Suites - (2 people) - \$60.00
Jacuzzi Room - \$75.00
(All rooms have a microwave
and refrigerator.)

BEST WESTERN METRO INN - 355-7483

Single outside - \$41.00 plus tax
Double outside - \$45.00 plus tax
Single inside (pool side) - \$45.00 plus tax
Double inside (pool side) - \$49.00 plus tax
(\$5.00 each additional adult)

RAMADA INN SOUTHWEST (Metro)

944-1150

Single - \$49.00 plus tax
Double - \$55.00 plus tax
(Up to 4 per room)

HOLIDAY INN - Highway 80 West

355-3472

\$58.00 plus tax
up to 4 per room

If you are interested in registering for Women's Celebration, contact the Woman's Missionary Union of the MBCB at 1-800-748-1651.

GA/ACTEENS DAYS

*WILLIAM CAREY COLLEGE

JANUARY 27, 1996

Time: 3:00 p.m.
(program begins)

Ballgame: 5:00 p.m.

Cost: \$7.50 per person
(includes program, limited insurance, supper, and the game)

Deadline: January 22, 1996

*BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

FEBRUARY 17, 1996

Time: 11:30 a.m.
(program begins)

Ballgame: 2:00 p.m.

Cost: \$7.50 per person
(includes program, limited insurance, supper, and the game)

Deadline: February 12, 1996

*MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

FEBRUARY 17, 1996

Time: 3:30 p.m. (program begins)

Ballgame: 5:45 p.m.

Cost: \$7.50 per person
(includes program, limited insurance, supper, and the game)

Deadline: February 12, 1996

* Limited seating

School Choice for GA/Acteens Day

Name of Church _____

Association _____

Leader Name (Person sending registration) _____

Address _____

Daytime Phone Number _____

Church Phone Number _____

Amount Enclosed: \$7.50 x # _____ = \$ _____

(Please make checks payable to: **Woman's Missionary Union**)

Mail to: _____

GA/Acteens Day at _____ (School Above)

Woman's Missionary Union

P.O. Box 530

Jackson, MS 39205

It's Worth the Journey!

March 18-19, 1996

WHAT: Woman's Missionary Union Annual Meeting

WHEN: March 18 & 19 - begins on Monday at 1:45 p.m. and concludes Tuesday at noon.

WHERE: Alta Woods Baptist Church, 168 Colonial Drive, Jackson

SPEAKERS: Esther Burroughs, of the Home Mission Board; Randy Sprinkle of the Foreign Mission Board; and Joyce Mitchell of Woman's Missionary Union will speak at each of the three sessions.

Other speakers involved in various aspects of the convention will represent home, foreign, associational and state missions work.

For more information, call the WMU Office in Jackson, 601-968-3800, or 1-800-748-1651 outside Jackson.

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES:

VENEZUELA—

Date: June 15-28, 1996

Place: Rubio, Venezuela

What: Mission Meeting

Need: Team of 14 people to lead VBS for 1996

Cost: \$1,200.00 (includes airfare from Jackson, housing, meals, and local transportation)

If interested, please contact Jan Conley, WMU Office, 1-800-748-1651 or in Jackson, 601-968-3800

10th Annual STATE-WIDE Growth Spiral Conference

February 12, 1996

Trinity Baptist Church, Southaven

8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Conference fee \$5.00.

Provides lunch and conference materials.

Experience Growth
Through a Dynamic,
Balanced
Sunday School
Ministry



Ken Marler

Growth Consultant in the Pastor-Staff Section, General Leadership Department, Bible Teaching-Reaching Division of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville. He is a former Mississippian.

SCHEDULE

8:30 Conference Registration/
Fellowship
9:00-Noon Conference
Noon-1:00 Lunch
1:00-3:00 Conference
3:00 Dismiss

Church Orchestra Festival

Saturday, February 17
Crossgates Baptist Church, Brandon

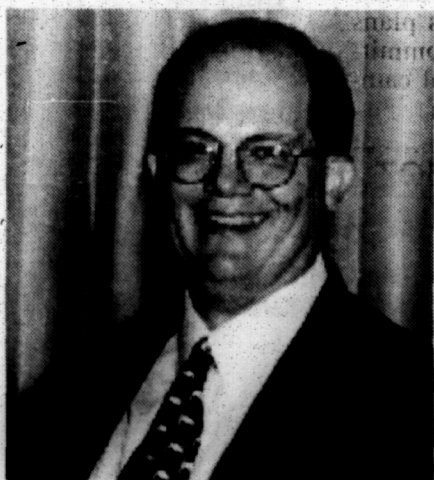
"Let Everything that Hath
Breath Praise the Lord"

Guidelines

1. Minister of music and instrumentalists are invited to attend and listen or play in the Mass Orchestra.
2. All percussion equipment will be available at the church.

Schedule

- 8:00 Registration
- 8:30 Mass Orchestra
- 9:30 Guest Orchestra, Crossgates BC, Brandon
- 10:00 Guest Orchestra, Alta Woods BC, Jackson
- 10:30 Break
- 10:45 Guest Orchestra, Pine Lake BC, Brandon
- 11:15 Mass Orchestra
- 12:30 Dismissal



Clinician:

Bruce Zeiger

Former trumpet soloist with
the Air Force Band

For more information about the Church Orchestra Festival, contact the Church Music Dept. of the MBCB at 968-3800 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651

1996 CHURCH BUSINESS ADMINISTRATORS CONFERENCES

"Employment-Related Legal Issues"

- ◆ **Purpose:** To deal with issues concerning church employment practices - risks, regulations, and guidelines. To offer information on financial planning and investments.
- ◆ **Target Audience:** Church Business Administrators, Church Staff, Personnel Committee Members, Financial Committee Members.
- ◆ **Finances:** There is no charge for the conference. (You will be on your own for meals.)
- ◆ **Keynote Speakers:** Julie Bloss, legal counsel for the Annuity Board of SBC, Dallas; Hal Fisher, director, Mississippi Baptist Foundation, Jackson



Julie Bloss

JANUARY 23, 1996
First Baptist Church, Grenada
741 Line Street

JANUARY 24, 1996
First Baptist Church, Hattiesburg
510 W. Pine Street

JANUARY 25, 1996
Broadmoor Baptist Church
787 E. Northside Drive, Jackson



Hal Fisher

For further information, contact: Julius Thompson, 800-748-1651, (in Jackson) 968-3800.

VOLUNTEER & PART-TIME YOUTH WORKERS WORKSHOP

LOCATION/LEADER

FBC, Amory—Shannon Slover leading
Clarksdale Baptist Church—Wayne Pinkerton leading
FBC, Richland—Harvey Ellis leading
FBC, Carthage—Jeff Holeman leading
Central Baptist Church, Brookhaven—Jon Daniel leading
FBC, Wiggins—Bruce Brady leading

AUDIENCE

Volunteer and part-time persons who work with youth ministry in the smaller membership church.

PURPOSE

Participants will discover basic principles that can lead to a balanced, comprehensive, and effective youth ministry in the smaller membership church.

FINANCES

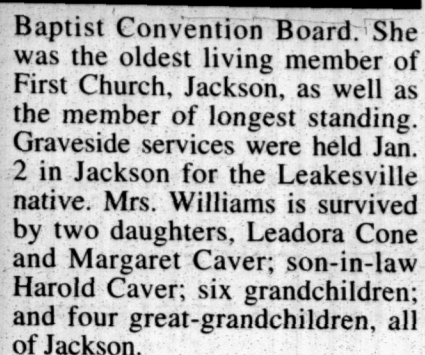
There is no cost for attending this conference.

March 23, 1996
10:0 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

If you would like more information about the Youth Workers Workshop or would like to register, contact the Discipleship & Family Ministry Dept. of the MBCB at 968-3800 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651

HOUSE TOPS


Names in the News



Pastor John McDonald, 70, dies

John G. McDonald, 70, of Jackson, died of heart failure Dec. 21 at his home in Jackson.

Funeral services were held Dec. 22 at First Church, Jackson.



McDonald was a Vicksburg native and a graduate of Mississippi College and Southern Seminary. He pastored churches in Monticello, Concord, Goodman, and Jackson, and was serving as interim pastor of Main Street Church, Goodman, at the time of his death.

Survivors include his wife Judine, son Tommy of Hernando, daughter Judy McKeigney of Jackson, brother Roy of Ashland, and four grandchildren.



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The Annual Pilgrimage to Historic Homes in Holly Springs will be held April 18-20. Eight homes and the historic cemetery will be open. For more information, write Caroline S. McCrosky, 225 W. Chulahoma Ave., Holly Springs, MS 38635.

There will be a "Drama in Worship" Conference, April 18-20, in Nashville, Tenn. The conference is sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board and there is a registration fee. Call (615) 251-3837 for more information.

New Orleans Seminary will present another "Facing the Issues," Jan. 22. "Baptists and Calvinism" will be the subject. Call (800) 662-8701, ext. 3260 for more information.

Oak Grove Church, Lake, gave \$1,447 to Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions. Victor R. Vaughn Sr. is pastor.

Trinity Church, Laurel,
recently held a GA Recognition

First Church, Biloxi, approved on Dec. 3 the purchase of 24 acres in North Biloxi. The recommendation was accepted by a 94% favorable response.

First Church, organized in 1845, has met in three downtown locations. The present location has been occupied since 1925.

Frank Gunn, pastor for 23 years, said the church has been visited a number of times by church growth consultants such as Ron Lewis and Chuck Kelley. Steve Newton of the Church Architecture Department of the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville has made several trips and is developing plans for the

Old Oak Grove Church, Myrtle, held an Acteen Recognition Service on Oct. 22. The theme was "A Time to Grow." Acteens, from left, are Larisa Grisham, Queen with Scepter; Ginger Simmons, Queen with Scepter; Mandi Hargrove, Queen with Scepter; Amanda Roberson, Queen Regent; and Cindi Dawson, Queen Regent. Tommy Peters is pastor.

Service. Five girls were recognized during the service for their work and participation. Three girls were recognized as new members. Girls present were Jennifer Parker, Jessica Davis, Lysnie Lyon, Emily Boutwell, Gena Thompson, Megan Cockrill,

Melissa Cockrill, and Melanie
Cockrill.

Covington-Jeff Davis Association will host contemporary Christian entertainer Michael Passons in concert at the associational family life center on Jan. 20 at 7 p.m. A love offering will be taken. The Yazoo City native has led music at Gulfshore Assembly, and appeared in "The Young Messiah." Passons will be available for other concerts Jan. 21-28. He may be reached at (615) 791-4864.

Popps Ferry Church, Gulf Coast Association, has called Sean Brooks as pastor. He is a student at New Orleans Seminary.

Linwood Church, Neshoba Association, has called Richard Boykin as minister of music effective Nov. 5. A native of Scott, Boykin received his education at Mississippi State University.

Bob G. Lynch, pastor of **Central Church, McComb**, for the past 15 years, is retiring. Lynch has pastored Central Church twice for a total of 24 years. He previously served Drew Church and First Church, Clewiston, Fla. Lynch is available for interim and supply. He can be contacted to 230 West Street, McComb, MS 39648 or call (601) 684-6419.

Star Church, Star, has called **J. Darren Miley** as minister of youth and activities effective Dec. 1. Miley is a graduate of William Carey College and New Orleans Seminary. He formerly served as interim pastor at County Line Church. Vic Bowman is pastor.

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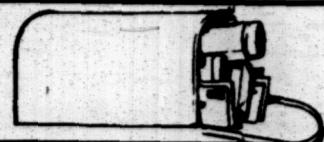
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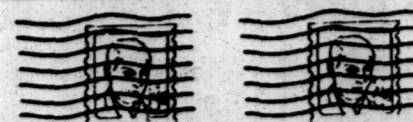
Name _____ Age _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____



Letters to the editor



Disturbed by firing

Editor:

I was disturbed by the report in the Dec. 7 issue of **The Baptist Record** concerning the firing of the missionary couple in Singapore because of "charismatic practices."

Most Baptists would give lip service to the idea that we are in the "last days." God's Word confirms that; if this is the case, there will be signs and wonders—and a great revival.

It seems that, for the last 15 years, we, as a denomination, have been more concerned with denominational distinctives than with being open to the will of God. While the Holy Spirit has been bringing down denominational walls (without destroying denominational distinctives), we have been reactionary, and have further retreated into our own little corner of the kingdom. In so doing, we risk being left out of the revival that has already begun.

Admittedly, when the Holy Spirit moves, Satan counterattacks. We must test the spirits, and realize that the enemy will counterfeit and confuse in an attempt to discredit; but to attribute the authentic works of the Spirit to the deceiver is to place one's self in a very dangerous position.

In Acts 5, Gamaliel counseled the Sanhedrin: "If this plan or action should be of men, it will be overthrown; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God."

In Matthew 15, Jesus says, "...I will build my church."

I believe that the Holy Spirit is fully capable of protecting the Word of God, and that Jesus the Christ is fully capable of protecting his church. If we truly believe in the sovereignty of God, let's let him do his work.

Richard J. Shropshire
Biloxi

Praying for Carrolls

Editor:

My prayers are with Charles and Sharon Carroll, 13-year missionary veterans recently dismissed because of their charismatic practices (**The Baptist Record**, Dec. 7, 1995, page 3).

I urge members of the Foreign Mission Board to travel to the church in Singapore and worship with the believers at the Community of Praise Church. Observe the work of the Lord and pray for spiritual discernment.

I don't know the Carrolls, and I've never been "slain in the Spirit." I have, however, observed others quietly sag to the floor and remain awhile. I've seen looks of peace and joy, and sometimes tears during this time. Sometimes they seem to turn burdens over to the Lord and find new hope.

Are the Carrolls leading lives that reflect the Lord (Matt. 5:16)?

Are they leading people to know Christ as Lord and Savior?

Are they discipling new believers and getting them into Bible study and prayer? Does their ministry help, or hurt, the cause of Christ? What will be the impact on the lives of the church members if the Carrolls are not reinstated? What do you tell someone who has had an intimate, life-changing experience with God that doesn't happen to fit your theology? (Just as many Protestants don't believe in a personal salvation experience the way Southern Baptists and many others evangelicals do.)

Please... don't put God in a box. He is awesome and able to do exceedingly abundantly above and beyond all we can think or ask. Please, Foreign Mission Board members, judge the tree by its fruit.

Merry Beth Tigert
Laurel

Decayed standards

Editor:

Hopefully this letter will inform your readers of a situation contributing to the further degradation of the traditional societal structure of our country. The Disney Corporation has decided to extend health benefits to homosexual partners of employees.

This seems to be a contradiction for a company that has, in the past, striven to provide wholesome, moral entertainment to America. The reason seems to be that they have bought into the liberal, politically-correct assertion that homosexuality is a morally acceptable lifestyle.

The Disney Corporation is, of course, free to run their company as they please. I and my family are also free, by the same token, to spend our entertainment dollars as we see fit. The Florida Baptist Convention, as I understand, has called for a boycott of all Disney products to protest the Disney action. I would urge everyone who believes in our traditional biblically-based value system to join this boycott.

I can hear the naysayers now, stating they just couldn't deprive their children of Disney products. There are plenty of alternatives that still abound — different theme parks, other movies, and a host of non-Disney toys and stuffed animals. What will you and your family choose to do with your discretionary entertainment dollars? As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Randy H. Russell
Madison

Re: Human Life Bill

Editor:

Maybe with the latest instrument of "non-invasive" abortion becoming widely available, i.e. the pills, the pro-life people will wake up to the real problem in our country. The problem is not abortion. There have been women throughout our short history who have killed their unborn children. The problem is legalized abortion. The

civil magistrates have said it is all right to kill the unborn child.

Before abortion was legalized, God's judgment was on those individuals who violated the law. "Thou shalt do no murder." He excluded them from the kingdom of God.

To remove God's judgment from the nation, civil magistrates must once again forbid murder by abortion. This could be done by vacating *Roe vs. Wade*. Without divine intervention, this will never occur. However, the Constitution does provide a way to stop abortion. There is a remedy for judicial tyranny in Article 3 Section 2, which allows Congress to regulate and except judicial review.

Congress can pass a Human Life Bill. It should state: (a) Human life begins at conception and will be afforded all the protections of a person under the constitution; (b) The Supreme Court and all lower Federal Courts are excluded from jurisdiction concerning this law.

If elected representatives will not do this, they are not really pro-life. They won't do what they can to stop abortion. We must elect those who will do what they can. This will lift God's judgment from the nation. Then the prosecution of those individuals who hire the murder of their children will make abortion rare.

We have a choice — God's law or chaos.

Lucius B. Pooser, pastor
Halbert Heights Church
Brookhaven

News from Tanzania

Editor:

We want to wish each one of you a very joyous Christmas celebration and a 1996 that will glorify our Lord. He is not only the "Reason for the Season," but he is the reason for our whole existence and for our being here in East Africa.

Thank each one of you who supports our ministry through the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

We finished our official Swahili language study on Sept. 29. Dennis traveled to Tanzania to find a rent house in Tanga. It will take about a month to fix the house up for us to move in, so we are waiting in Kenya at this writing.

Lauren and John are now grade school "drop-outs" (for the time being). They have left Rosslyn Academy in Nairobi to be home schooled after we move to Tanga. Micah is a preschool drop-out! Margaret will also be working with him when we get our schooling materials in our crates. Lauren is 9 years old, John is 7, and Micah is 5.

Dennis and Margaret McCall
Missionaries to Tanzania
P.O. Box 5864
Tanga, Tanzania

Now in Moldova

Editor:

We flew out of Jackson on Oct.

16 as scheduled. On Oct. 17, Dan and Libby Panter joined us in Austria and flew to Moldova with us. Dan is the associate to the area director for Europe. We arrived in Kishinev, Moldova, on the afternoon of Oct. 17. Mike Norfleet, our missions administrator from Kiev, Ukraine, and Joe Saunders, ISC missionary in Moldova, met us at the airport.

In Moldova the soil is rich and the countryside is covered with grape vineyards, orchards, sugar beets, corn, wheat, and other crops. The capital, Kishinev, is heavily populated. Most of the city people live in apartment buildings which were constructed during the Soviet days. More Russian language is spoken than we had anticipated. Nearly all the Moldovans speak at least two languages.

About 200 churches make up the Moldovan Baptist Union. We have found the Christians to be very sincere and committed to the Lord.

We are grateful for your gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Our address is c/o Evangelical Baptist Union, Posta Veche 31, Kishinev 277059, Moldova. We cannot receive packages safely at this time.

Ken and Mattie McLemore
Missionaries to Moldova

News from France

Editor:

This is the season during which our churches think and pray for foreign missions. We feel it right that we share with you what God is doing through our joint efforts here in France. You have been praying for several here:

Ginette is so excited because God spoke to her. She's been a real doubter and though she's been faithful to services it's more for company than from conviction. Now she is excited that perhaps Dieu can do more and she will be saved. She admits to fighting the submission to the will of the Father.

Dominique is faithful and excited about her studies in "Experiencing God." She needs to make a commitment for baptism and church membership.

The same can be said about Monique who is in another class. Silvia is in another class and is so excited about this breath of fresh air in her spiritual life. I have three classes of "Experiencing God" and Wayne has one.

We thank our heavenly Father for the little glimpses of awakening that we see in the lives of those to whom we witness.

Albine, my neighbor, is opening

more to my witness and [has gone] from being practically an atheist is telling me that I am right, that there is a God.

This month is very busy for Wayne. He has four out-of-town conferences as well as pastoral duties and Spanish lessons twice a week. Since we are close to Spain there are many Spanish-speaking people in our area.

We thank you for paying our salary, providing us transportation, housing, and enabling our mission to share the gospel through various means through the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Florence and Wayne Frederick
Missionaries to France

Back on home soil

Editor:

We have been in Germany now for over a year. We completed our initial language learning in March and moved to take over responsibilities as pastor in April.

It has been an interesting year, much of which has been back and forth to the Landstuhl hospital near Ramstein Air Force Base. I have had three surgeries on my stomach, the most recent only less than four weeks ago. Martha also has been ill from the virus she contracted when we were last in Turkey. She is all right now, but will have to take B-12 shots for the rest of her life.

We plan to be at home in Myrtle for four weeks beginning on Dec. 26. We are looking forward to being with the family again. My mother, 88, is doing well. She is staying with my older sister, Polly. Marty, our son, is still in Hattiesburg, doing work with the Police Department. His son, Marcus Kenneth, accepted the Lord a few weeks back and wants his granddad to baptize him while I am at home.

Our address in Myrtle is P.O. Box 211, Myrtle, MS 38650. Telephone: (601) 988-2875.

Ken and Martha Cooper
Missionaries to Germany

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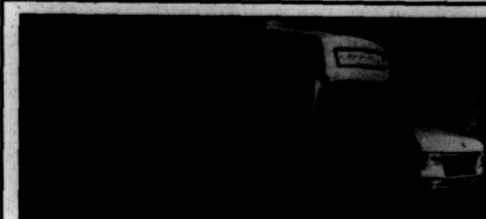
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Uniform The mission



By David Mitchell
Isaiah 49

The Servant's call and preparation (vv. 1-3). Michael Buffer has drawn the attention of many boxing fans with his signature call to a match: "Let's get ready to rumble." Following those words, he then gives the qualifications of the boxers and their heights, weights, and records.

The call for all parts of the earth to give respectful attention to the statement of the Servant's qualifications begins the second of the Servant songs in Isaiah 49:1. He is qualified because 1) God has called him from the womb; 2) God has endowed him for the work as a sharp sword and a special arrow; 3) God has made his mouth; and 4) he is protected by God.

Earthly qualifications at times seem impressive. Such is the case with Prince Charles, who is heir apparent to the throne of England. Charles' full name is Charles Phillip Arthur George of the House of Windsor. His titles are: His Royal Highness; Knight of the Garter; Knight, Order of the Thistle; Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester; Duke of Cornwall and Duke of Rothesay; Earl of Carrick and Baron Renfrew; Lord of the Isles and Great Steward of Scotland; Personal Aide-de-Camp to the Queen; and Great Master of the Order of the Bath.

While this list is an impressive list of titles, another person lives whose title causes even those of Prince Charles to wane into insignificance. The title is Servant. Again, the name of the Servant in verse 3 continues to be a mystery. Without any preceding or following text, one would assume verse 3 refers to the Jews. Others have suggested the reference is to Isaiah, and still others to a body of prophets. Many believe it refers to the Messiah.

God has also prepared all his children for servanthood. Through the still small voice of the Holy Spirit, God reveals what our mission should be. We can answer and respond with confidence because God has prepared and called us to be on mission with him.

The Servant's reward (v. 4). We are all accustomed to the saying: "An honest day's wage for an honest day's work." In verse 4, we find the Servant lamenting the visible lack of success, but he consoles himself with the knowledge that his cause is with God, and that his labors will not go unrewarded. It was not as if he had no success in his work, but that he had comparatively no success. His consolation was in the fact that God approved of his work, and that he would ultimately be rewarded for his labors by God. The idea is: I know that God approves of my work, and he will grant me the reward of my work. This verse indicates perfect confidence in God and a calm unwavering assurance of his favor. The Servant left his name, his character, his reputation, his plans, and his labors all with God, believing that his cause was the cause of God; and that he would be abundantly rewarded for his toils.

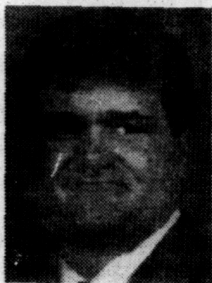
We would do well to follow the example of the Servant's trust in God. Many times our efforts seem to be in vain. When we begin to feel discouraged, we should remember God has promised to reward our efforts, if not in this life, most assuredly in the next.

The Servant's mission (vv. 5-6). God announces the Servant's mission in verses 5 and 6. He proves the confidence the Servant displayed in him and verse 4 to be true. God's design for the Servant was far more important than just the salvation of the Jews. God's desire was for the Servant to spread salvation to all parts of the world.

We must accept God's call to take the message of Jesus to everyone, no matter their color, economic status, or social standing. It is not our job to determine who we deem worthy of the fellowship of our community of faith. It is our job to determine what must happen in our lives so that we can see the worth of others as God does. Selective evangelism is not God's way. Jesus died for "whosoever," not just for those whom we deem worthy of the gospel.

Mitchell is pastor of Van Winkle Church, Jackson.

Bible Book Holding fast to Christ



By Clayton Littlejohn
Colossians 2

Paul's admonition to hold fast to Christ teaches that Christians should keep Christ as the focus of their faith. This portion of Scripture shows how timeless God's Word is. We can identify today with many of the problems the Colossians faced. The Gnostics (false teachers) taught that Jesus alone was not enough for salvation, and that you must practice certain disciplines, observe special days, and follow strict laws to find true salvation. We hear that same heresy today by New Agers, cults, and certain denominations. Paul shows us that true salvation is not what we do, but what Christ has already done for us.

Appeal for faithfulness (vv. 6-7). Paul challenged the Colossians to rebuke the Gnostics' teaching by remaining faithful to Christ. He reminded them that the faith by which they received Christ was the same faith by which they were to walk (v. 6). Faith is a gift from God (Eph. 2:8-9); you just accept it, and walk in it.

The Gnostics said, "Your salvation is shallow." Paul rebuked this by saying, "You have been firmly rooted... and are now being built up in him" (v. 7). Our faith is like the taproot on certain evergreens — it runs deep. Our foundation is Christ (Eph. 2:20), therefore we can be built up in him by holding fast to Christ through faith.

Centrality of Christ's actions for believers (vv. 8-15). Paul warned the Colossian saints that false teaching leads to spiritual captivity rather than freedom. Notice the vehicles through which they could become captive (v. 8): "... through philosophy... empty deceptions... traditions of men... and elementary principals of the world."

Philosophy means to love wisdom. All wisdom is not sinful (James 3:17), but to put intellect above faith is sin. Earthly wisdom (James 3:15) leads to theories such as evolution. The Gnostics claimed to be deep thinkers when in fact they were shallow and deceived.

Next, notice these are "men's traditions," which Jesus condemned (Matt. 15:1-20). All traditions are not sinful (Deut. 6:17-25), but they should never replace faith in Christ.

Paul's next warning was about the "elementary principals of the world." This can be following the ABC's of wisdom, or the worship of angels (v. 18), or seeking guidance from the stars (astrology). Either way it leads to captivity rather than growth and freedom.

Next Paul rebuked the most maniacal of the Gnostic heresies: that Jesus was one of many emanations of God. Paul said Jesus is "the fullness of Deity in bodily form" (God in the flesh) (v. 9), and "in him believers are complete" (v. 10). These verses reveal Jesus' person: he is God. His position is "head (preeminent) over all rule and authority (angels and government)." Because we are complete in him, we don't need to be held captive by acts of legalism, such as "circumcision" (v. 11) and "baptism" (v. 12).

Baptism was part of the salvation process taught by the Gnostics. The Corinthians had this problem also (1 Cor. 1:12-17). At the moment of salvation, a believer is baptized into Christ (1 Cor. 12:13), and our water baptism is a symbolic expression of an inward experience. We are not saved by water, but by a person, Christ. In verses 13-14, Paul said salvation "comes by Christ, giving life... forgiving our sins, and canceling all our sin debts by nailing them to the cross." Jesus did all the work so we wouldn't have to. Through Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, he defeated Satan and his demons, and forever stands as victor (v. 15).

Warning not to be led astray (vv. 16-19). Paul listed more of the heresies that would lead the Colossians (and us) astray: dietary laws, festivals, and sacred days (v. 16). These are only "shadows" (they can't be nailed to a cross) of the salvation in Christ (v. 17). The Gnostics also taught that one must deny physical needs, worship angels, and have visions (v. 18). Paul rebuked all these by showing that "the head" — who is Christ — will supply all the body needs for salvation and growth (v. 19).

Futility of adding to the true faith (vv. 20-23). As believers we have "died to the elementary principals of the world...." Why should we allow these in any part in our salvation? We must not dig up the dead. Instead, we must hold fast to our faith in the risen Christ.

Littlejohn is pastor of Ingram Church, Baldwin.

Life and Work Making a difference



By Linda Donnell
Matthew 5

During World War II, England's Prime Minister Winston Churchill said, "Never did so many owe so much to so few." In regard to God's disciples today, it might be said, "Never did so few owe so much to so many." Indeed there is much to be done in the world and God expects his followers to make a difference.

Influencing the world (vv. 13-16). When Jesus called his disciples he told them that they should be "fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19). Now he further instructed them on what he designed them to be, referring to them as "salt" and "light."

As salt, Christ's intention was for his followers to season the world with knowledge and grace (v. 13). A few grains of salt go a long way in flavoring the taste of food. Likewise, the disciples could scatter out, even though small in number, and have a tremendous impact.

Of what good is salt that has lost its flavor? And what good are Christians who are void of spiritual life and vigor? "It is henceforth good for nothing..." (v. 13) Those Christians who only profess to believe do more harm than good.

"Ye are the light of the world" (v. 14) speaks of disciples as being conspicuous and sharing their witness with others.

"Let your light so shine" (v. 16) is a command, not an option. The light must not be hidden nor should the salt remain in the shaker.

With disciples on a bold mission in the world, there certainly exists the possibility that "good works" could be done for the wrong motive. Jesus emphasized that the goal must be to point men to the Saviour (v. 16) and not to themselves.

Living by God's commands (vv. 17-19). As Jesus directed the disciples to make a difference in the world, he made it clear that they should live by God's commands and to teach them to others. His intention was not to set aside the Mosaic laws, but rather to tear away the man-made traditions and interpretations that had been added by the Pharisees (v. 17).

There are two ways to destroy an acorn. You can put it down and mash it to bits, or you can plant it and allow it to "fulfill itself" by becoming a tree. Christians can fulfill the law by yielding to the Holy Spirit and allowing him to work in their lives to produce fruit.

Pursuing righteousness (v. 20). What a surprise it must have been for the disciples to hear Jesus say that they should be better than the scribes and Pharisees — the most noted teachers and the most celebrated professors of the law. How could they be better than the "best"?

The quality of righteousness that Jesus expected was higher than that practiced by the religious leaders. Theirs was artificial and held them in bondage; whereas God called for a conduct that was internal, spontaneous, and positive.

Verse 20 serves as a summary statement of Jesus' expectations of his disciples, and is, in fact, the heart of the Sermon on the Mount.

Even today Christians have trouble moving from the outward show of godliness to the *inside* of godliness. In evaluating your life, how much of your time is spent in endless activities (however good they are) for the outward show, as opposed to the improvement of your private life with God?

We are called to penetrate society with our influence and witness. How actively involved are you in making a difference? Each new day that God brings our way is a fresh opportunity.

Donnell is a member of First Church, Hattiesburg.

capsules

BAPTISTS PLAN JOINT RELIEF IN WAR-TORN BOSNIA: HAMBURG, Germany (ABP) — Seventeen European Baptist leaders met Dec. 9 to explore and develop cooperative relief efforts in Bosnia. The three Baptist unions in the former Yugoslavia — the Croatian Baptist Union, the Baptist Union of Serbia, and the Evangelical Christian Baptist Union of Yugoslavia — were represented at the roundtable meeting in Hamburg, Germany. Other leaders at the meeting included Karl Heinz Walter, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation; Paul Montacute, director of Baptist World Aid, the relief arm of the Baptist World Alliance; and three Southern Baptist missionaries. The leaders agreed to channel relief to Baptists in Serbia and Croatia as they try to minister to the needs of 3 million people displaced by war, and to grant special assistance to 300 Serbian refugees who recently fled to Serbia to help them become established in the predominantly Orthodox Serbia. They also agreed to offer help to the Baptist church in Sarajevo, assisting the Baptist Union of Croatia in supporting a pastor, developing mission work, distributing Bibles and Christian literature, and providing operating expenses. The small congregation, led by a recent Muslim convert, is regarded as a strategic site for developing evangelistic work in Bosnia. Montacute and Walter will visit Serbia in January to investigate further needs in the area. The group agreed that U.S. fund-raising for the joint relief effort would be coordinated through the Baptist World Alliance. Contributions to the joint relief effort may be sent to Baptist World Aid at the Baptist World Alliance, 6733 Curran Street, McLean, VA 22101-6005. Telephone: (703) 790-8980.

"GET REAL... READY... RIGHT," LEAVELL URGES NEW ORLEANS GRADS: NEW ORLEANS (BP) — "Rather than looking at the past and trying to recall days that were different — and, in the eyes of many, were better — let's take a long look at the here and now, for that's the only one that you're going to have the privilege of working in," Landrum Leavell II told graduates during the annual mid-session commencement service at New Orleans Seminary Dec. 15. During the 78th annual graduation, 119 students completed requirements for their degrees, including the first graduates from the seminary's Spanish extension center in Tampa, Fla., Jose A. Islas and Fernando Islas Sr. The Islases, also the first father and son to graduate from New Orleans Seminary with the same degree on the same day, each completed the associate of divinity in pastoral ministry degree, which they began together in 1988. Both are pastors in Florida. Including the Islases, New Orleans Seminary granted 17 associate degrees, 20 baccalaureate degrees, 63 master's degrees, and 19 doctoral degrees.

GRAHAM TARGETS 2.5 BILLION VIA GLOBAL TV SERIES IN '96: MINNEAPOLIS (BP) — Evangelist Billy Graham announced Jan. 3 that the Global Television Series — to be broadcast at prime time during the month of April in every country of the world — will bring the gospel to more people on a single day, April 14, than on any previous day in history. "Through the Global Television Series, we anticipate reaching 2.5 billion people, most of whom we could never reach in our usual crusade ministry," Graham said. "I believe this will have a far greater impact than anything we have ever done before." A special evangelistic preaching program featuring Graham will be broadcast in 42 languages on national television networks in more than 160 countries. It will also be broadcast on two of the largest intercontinental satellite networks in the world, STAR-TV and BSKYB, which cover approximately two-thirds of the world's population — including some countries traditionally opposed to the proclamation of the gospel.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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This week's clue: S equals D.

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke Four: Four.

Baptist churches bolster Mississippi reconciliation

By Jo Kadlecck

JACKSON (BP) — On a normal Mississippi Sunday afternoon last August, members from several Southern Baptist churches braved the summer heat and joined several hundred other churchgoers for a picnic. The crowd consumed dozens of hot dogs and hamburgers, kids sat still long enough to have their faces painted and families laughed together in a shaded park pavilion as they listened to Christian music over a portable tape player.

By all external appearances, this was a normal church picnic — except for the black and white faces sitting side by side.

The picnic purposefully brought together African American and white Christians from a variety of churches and denominations throughout Jackson for one simple reason: Christian unity.

The multi-church picnic is just one example of how Mission Mississippi is helping the state change these days in regard to racial matters. Three years ago, Mission Mississippi rallied across racial and denominational lines to launch a ministry committed to reconciliation. Local residents call the group's efforts nothing short of "radical."

Their vision of unity encourages black and white Christians to come together "so that the message of Christ can be better seen in our communities throughout Mississippi," according to Lee Paris, chairman of Mission Mississippi's state board of directors.

"Reconciliation and unity does not happen by rallies," said Jarvis Ward, Mission Mississippi's executive director, "but rather, by right relationships — first people who are rightly related to the one living and true God through faith in Jesus Christ alone, and then to each other."

To help foster such relationships, Jarvis and his staff of volunteers organize a variety of creative gatherings throughout the year, including weekly prayer meetings at one of the 100-plus churches participating in Mission Mississippi, 50% of which are African American and 50% white, representing a dozen denominations.

Each Thursday morning, an average of 30 to 50 pastors, leaders, and supporters gather for prayer, devotions, fellowship, and breakfast. If participants miss the Thursday morning meeting, they are invited to a Friday morning prayer meeting at the Salvation Army headquarters.

"The first Thursday morning prayer breakfast was held May 6, 1993," says Portia McGehee, co-chair of the Mission Mississippi prayer committee. "Since that time, we have prayed in 50 locations. Alternating between black and white churches has been enriching."

In addition to the interracial prayer breakfasts, Mission Mississippi holds an annual citywide

rally in Jackson. Last Oct. 18-19, for example, 6,000 Christians from throughout the state attended the third annual, worship-oriented Mission Mississippi Reconciliation Rally at the Mississippi Coliseum. Black pastor E.V. Hill of Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Los Angeles, called by *Time* magazine as "one of the most outstanding preachers in the United States," addressed the interracial crowd, along with Frank Pollard, pastor of Jackson's First Church.

The Baptist pastors shared messages focusing on grace and brotherly love. Pollard discussed how Christ's journey to the cross and his subsequent death are the key reasons how he can love his brother, E.V. Hill, as he did. "Our friendship is based on Christ and grounded in his love," Pollard said of his long friendship with Hill.

Hill's message centered on his early racist attitudes and how God removed his hatred of white people through the unconditional love of one man. "If God could break my

heart, there is no person that God could not change," he said. Hill then called the audience to stand and repent of any racist attitudes they had ever had. Hundreds confessed their sin and accepted the challenge to meet with someone of another race on a regular basis.

The interracial Mission Mississippi Mass Choir sang at the rally, under the direction of a host of local choir leaders. Mississippi First Lady Pat Fordice admonished the audience to stay involved in politics and to pray for their governmental leaders. "We cannot afford to lose this great nation," she said. "We must pray for God to heal our land."

Along with contemporary recording artist Kathy Troccoli, motivational speaker Joseph Jennings, a former gang leader and drug addict, spoke to Jackson youths in local schools and at the rally services. "I understand the extremes of desperation induced by drugs, crime, and illicit sex," said the 6-foot-11-inch, 280-pound Jennings who kept the attention of the teenagers.

According to Gary Maze, Mission Mississippi youth committee chairman, more than 260 youths recorded decisions for Christ as a result of a featured youth night. Organizers are planning a similar reconciliation rally for youths and families next fall and each year after until said Paris. "Mission

is known for its love."

Individual congregations also are challenged to build relationships across cultural lines. For instance, Cade Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, a predominantly African American church in inner-city Jackson, worshiped with Crossgates Church, a predominantly white church in Brandon, a suburb just outside of Jackson. The exchange was a natural event for the two pastors who had been meeting for lunch regularly during the past few years.

Horace Buckley, Cade Chapel's pastor, and Barry Clinigan of Crossgates Church have been building a unique friendship in their common desire to see the body of Christ unite. Their churches' "Pulpit Swap" Sunday was sponsored by Mission Mississippi, and several other churches have followed suit. Last August, the Crossgates church made a surprise offering to Cade Chapel's building program.

The efforts of Mission Mississippi have so impressed local residents and political representatives that Mississippi Gov. Kirk Fordice even declared October as Mission Mississippi Month.

Local and national press coverage has highlighted Mission Mississippi's efforts perhaps, said Ward, because "a model is being built to be a blessing from Mississippi to the entire nation."

For this to take place, Christians must draw from that source, Jesus Christ, who "alone reconciles sinners to God and who has given to the church the 'ministry of reconciliation,'" Ward said, citing the words in Scripture from 2 Corinthians 5:19.

Kadlecck is a free-lance writer in Jackson, and is co-author with John Perkins of *Resurrecting Hope: Powerful Stories of How God Is Moving to Reach Our Nation*, published by Regal Boo.



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